

Dayton O. Dec. 14th. 1862

Dear Husband,

Little Rob. had to give up and have the measles; he broke out well this morning; but seems to suffer from the cough. I hope however that a day or two hence will find him much more comfortable. He was very sensitive, and would not allow Frank to look at his face this morning; he however told me to tell you and Emma that he had the measles, in his own words "I've got the measles". — Frank and Belle still cough too much, but the Doctor's prescription to night will doubtless make them better. I too am taking medicine but fear all this nursing will not send me to you much improved. I consulted the Doctor to night as to when I might take Robby back; he said that unless something serious made its appearance, I might safely venture the Monday after New Years Day. That is some time hence, but on counting I see it brings it out just to the day you had set the 6th. of January! I had intended to start the Monday after Christmas, so as to prove you in the wrong, but the Fates are against me.

I went up to the office myself this morning but was disappointed ^{in my hopes of} getting a letter. Perhaps tomorrow's mail will serve me better. — Your Letter of the Eighth came on Thursday and I was glad to find mine for that day had arrived. Many thanks for your kind expressions of confidence, which

I trust may now prove misplaud. — Thanks also for your attention to Mary's commissions; she has the work on sketching from nature of which you speak, so will not need it. — By the way in looking for that charcoal, did you find your gloves? You must have needed them during that severe cold weather of which ^{you} tell me in your last.

Never mind the flowers; I have brought home slips of all for Mother and Lib and hope to have duplicates from them.

I asked the Doctor how long I might safely delay my return to Dayton, and he thinks till the last of April.

I hope the War Department will not interfere with this, although I confess it will not be pleasant to have so many gentlemen around. I fear too that I shall not get all the exercise I need on that account, but perhaps you can help me to that after dusk.

Mrs. Perrine asked Mrs. Holt to put off her company till the next day, as that was her Birth day and she always had a family party then. Mrs. H. agreed, and ^(Mary and I, Mother also was invited) we passed a pleasant evening with Mrs. P. in company with ^{Mrs.} Holt, Mrs. Griffin, Mr. & Mrs. Fox Pierce, Mrs. Corwin and last but not least Mr. & Mrs. Brady. Wasn't that an event to be noticed?

The next evening we took Tea at Judge Holt's with Lib and Joe, Augusta Matthews and Mr. and Mrs. Tansdal. Mary has become very fleshy and her husband takes every opportunity that offers to joke her about it. She said she had heard that I was very thin and wanted to come and exhibit herself by way of contrast, but she didn't see that I was looking at all badly, her husband said he thought I was looking a great deal better. I hope I am, but

think the color in my cheeks which excitement gave me made me look better than usual.

Mellie Pierce is getting on well, but I expect on Christmas Day to hear that the remaining five are all sick from exposure to her. A merry Christmas that will be! (?)

Sella says Litty Brady said she was going to give her apron and wanted to know if she was intending to give her one; something must be given, and I wish to for the little thing is very affectionate and kind. Had I better confine myself to a good stock of candy and nuts for the children ^{and} both houses? — Then I thought of sending Priscilla a drum of figs or box of prunes. Do advise me fully, I have alluded to this matter before, but have not yet received an answer from you.

I took dinner at Uncle John's on Friday having Frank and Robby with me; the day was so mild that we thought the little fellows had better go out. Mrs. H. Davis also dropped in at meal time. I have met her before and we get along pleasantly quite, but the old joking times have passed away from us, I rather think forever!

Did I tell you that Lib Louzy and I met at Joe's the ^{second} Sunday after my return? She kissed me as if nothing unpleasant had ever occurred, called on me last week and has been very pleasant whenever we have met. She says Fielding has become very fleshy, and she threatens to disown him if he don't stop soon, the ^{between them} contrast is getting entirely too great.

Mary and I have yet nearly all our calls to make, being disappointed one day last week about going out, as Mother

was to ~~unwell~~ to leave in charge of the children, although she insisted she was not. She has had one of the worst spells of headache, I have ever known her to have.

I don't know what Uncle John would say to me for delaying to my fourth page to inform you of Will's safe arrival home. He is looking well, and is after disasters, also trying to recruit some men before Christmas, on which day he must report at the post of duty which is Memphis now. — Letter from Howard came yesterday from Holly Springs. I wish I could tell you exactly how to direct a letter to him as I know he and mother would be much pleased if you would write him; he wished us to tell him all about you. If you should write do be careful how you speak of any of your officers, commanding or others; there is much risk in sending letters to the field at any rate, and there are always enough envious ones willing to pick up anything that will injure a brother officer. Don't say 'pshaw!' but just be prudent if you please my good man. ~~Mother~~ ^{now} directs her letters to him thus. "Lieut. Howard Four, care of Col. Sprague of 83rd Reg. C.V.T. in camp near Holly Springs Mississippi. — Only see how your little woman can rattle away when she is talking to you! she thought she had nothing to say, and here is a sheet nearly full, of nonsense perhaps, but just as full of love if you will "keep your heart and eyes open to receive it", see I am greeting you best my Dear.

I must leave a small space to tell you how the children are in the morning so love and kisses till then. — Augusta Monday morning — All as well as can be expected. Is very wet and rainy that I cannot go up to the office but am going to watch for Uncle John. Goodbye dearest Augusta